

will furnish the comments received to the applicant along with a written assessment of any disagreements for incorporation into the final EIS.

(h) The UMTA requires a public hearing during the circulation period of all draft EISs. FHWA public hearing requirements are as described in § 771.111(h). Whenever a public hearing is held, the draft EIS shall be available at the public hearing and for a minimum of 15 days in advance of the public hearing. The availability of the draft EIS shall be mentioned, and public comments requested, in any public hearing notice and at any public hearing presentation. If a public hearing on an action proposed for FHWA funding is not held, a notice shall be placed in a newspaper similar to a public hearing notice advising where the draft EIS is available for review, how copies may be obtained, and where the comments should be sent.

(i) The FEDERAL REGISTER public availability notice (40 CFR 1506.10) shall establish a period of not less than 45 days for the return of comments on the draft EIS. The notice and the draft EIS transmittal letter shall identify where comments are to be sent.

(j) For UMTA funded major urban mass transportation investments, the applicant shall prepare a report identifying a locally preferred alternative at the conclusion of the Draft EIS circulation period. Approval may be given to begin preliminary engineering on the principal alternative(s) under consideration. During the course of such preliminary engineering, the applicant will refine project costs, effectiveness, and impact information with particular attention to alternative designs, operations, detailed location decisions and appropriate mitigation measures. These studies will be used to prepare the final EIS or, where appropriate, a supplemental draft EIS.

**§ 771.125 Final environmental impact statements.**

(a)(1) After circulation of a draft EIS and consideration of comments received, a final EIS shall be prepared by the Administration in cooperation with the applicant or, where permitted by law, by the applicant with appropriate guidance and participation by the Ad-

ministration. The final EIS shall identify the preferred alternative and evaluate all reasonable alternatives considered. It shall also discuss substantive comments received on the draft EIS and responses thereto, summarize public involvement, and describe the mitigation measures that are to be incorporated into the proposed action. Mitigation measures presented as commitments in the final EIS will be incorporated into the project as specified in § 771.109(b). The final EIS should also document compliance, to the extent possible, with all applicable environmental laws and Executive orders, or provide reasonable assurance that their requirements can be met.

(2) Every reasonable effort shall be made to resolve interagency disagreements on actions before processing the final EIS. If significant issues remain unresolved, the final EIS shall identify those issues and the consultations and other efforts made to resolve them.

(b) The final EIS will be reviewed for legal sufficiency prior to Administration approval.

(c) The Administration will indicate approval of the EIS for an action by signing and dating the cover page. Final EISs prepared for actions in the following categories will be submitted to the Administration's Headquarters for prior concurrence:

(1) Any action for which the Administration determines that the final EIS should be reviewed at the Headquarters office. This would typically occur when the Headquarters office determines that (i) additional coordination with other Federal, State or local governmental agencies is needed; (ii) the social, economic, or environmental impacts of the action may need to be more fully explored; (iii) the impacts of the proposed action are unusually great; (iv) major issues remain unresolved; or (v) the action involves national policy issues.

(2) Any action to which a Federal, State or local government agency has indicated opposition on environmental grounds (which has not been resolved to the written satisfaction of the objecting agency).

(3) Major urban mass transportation investments as defined by UMTA's policy on major investments (49 FR 21284; May 18, 1984).

(d) The signature of the UMTA approving official on the cover sheet also indicates compliance with section 14 of the UMT Act and fulfillment of the grant application requirements of sections 3(d)(1) and (2), 5(h), and 5(i) of the UMT Act.

(e) Approval of the final EIS is not an Administration Action (as defined in § 771.107(c)) and does not commit the Administration to approve any future grant request to fund the preferred alternative.

(f) The initial printing of the final EIS shall be in sufficient quantity to meet the request for copies which can be reasonably expected from agencies, organizations, and individuals. Normally, copies will be furnished free of charge. However, with Administration concurrence, the party requesting the final EIS may be charged a fee which is not more than the actual cost of reproducing the copy or may be directed to the nearest location where the statement may be reviewed.

(g) The final EIS shall be transmitted to any persons, organizations, or agencies that made substantive comments on the draft EIS or requested a copy, no later than the time the document is filed with EPA. In the case of lengthy documents, the agency may provide alternative circulation processes in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.19. The applicant shall also publish a notice of availability in local newspapers and make the final EIS available through the mechanism established pursuant to DOT Order 4600.13 which implements Executive Order 12372. When filed with EPA, the final EIS shall be available for public review at the applicant's offices and at appropriate Administration offices. A copy should also be made available for public review at institutions such as local government offices, libraries, and schools, as appropriate.

**§ 771.127 Record of decision.**

(a) The Administration will complete and sign a record of decision (ROD) no sooner than 30 days after publication of the final EIS notice in the FEDERAL

REGISTER or 90 days after publication of a notice for the draft EIS, whichever is later. The ROD will present the basis for the decision as specified in 40 CFR 1505.2, summarize any mitigation measures that will be incorporated in the project and document any required section 4(f) approval in accordance with § 771.135(l). Until any required ROD has been signed, no further approvals may be given except for administrative activities taken to secure further project funding and other activities consistent with 40 CFR 1506.1.

(b) If the Administration subsequently wishes to approve an alternative which was not identified as the preferred alternative but was fully evaluated in the final EIS, or proposes to make substantial changes to the mitigation measures or findings discussed in the ROD, a revised ROD shall be subject to review by those Administration offices which reviewed the final EIS under § 771.125(c). To the extent practicable the approved revised ROD shall be provided to all persons, organizations, and agencies that received a copy of the final EIS pursuant to § 771.125(g).

**§ 771.129 Re-evaluations.**

(a) A written evaluation of the draft EIS shall be prepared by the applicant in cooperation with the Administration if an acceptable final EIS is not submitted to the Administration within 3 years from the date of the draft EIS circulation. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether or not a supplement to the draft EIS or a new draft EIS is needed.

(b) A written evaluation of the final EIS will be required before further approvals may be granted if major steps to advance the action (e.g., authority to undertake final design, authority to acquire a significant portion of the right-of-way, or approval of the plans, specifications and estimates) have not occurred within three years after the approval of the final EIS, final EIS supplement, or the last major Administration approval or grant.

(c) After approval of the EIS, FONSI, or CE designation, the applicant shall consult with the Administration prior to requesting any major approvals or grants to establish whether or not the